

**MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS**

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Secretary of Defense William Perry will leave Washington Saturday evening, February 19, for Aviano, Italy. While there, he will meet with several of his NATO counterparts from countries providing forces to enforce the NAC decision on artillery in the Sarajevo area.

Secretary of State for Defense Malcolm Rifkind of the United Kingdom, Minister of Defense Fabio Fabbri of Italy, Minister of Defense Relus ter Beek of the Netherlands, and Minister of State for Defense Francois Leotard of France are expected to attend the meeting.

Also attending the meeting will be General John M. Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a number of his NATO counterparts.

The ministers and military chiefs of defense will receive a NATO Allied Forces Southern Europe briefing on the current situation in Sarajevo and the concept of operations should they be required. The meeting also provides the opportunity to discuss next steps to reinvigorate the peace plan.

While in Aviano, Secretary Perry will meet with U.S. pilots, air crews and support personnel assigned to the Italian facility in support of NATO operations.

Secretary of Defense Perry will return to Washington Sunday night, February 20.

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## 2 top U.S. defense leaders to meet NATO peers

By Bill Gertz  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Defense Secretary William Perry and Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will travel to Italy this weekend to discuss Bosnian air strikes with their NATO counterparts, as the deadline for bombing raids nears.

The meeting at Aviano Air Base

in northern Italy, where U.S. warplanes are set to launch bombing raids against Serbian artillery, coincides with the Sunday night deadline set by the United Nations for placing all heavy guns around Sarajevo under U.N. control.

"They want to get together at Aviano to have a briefing on the plan" for air attacks, said Pentagon spokeswoman Kathleen deLaski. "Their countries are the

ones that could well be involved in an air operation. And we think it does show resolve."

Mr. Perry and Gen. Shalikashvili will meet with British Defense Minister Malcolm Rifkind, French Defense Minister Francois Leotard, Italian Defense Minister Fabio Fabbri, and Dutch Defense Minister Rijkman Groenendaal, as well as NATO military officials.

The NATO defense ministers

will hear from Gen. John Joulwan, NATO's top commander, and Adm. Jeremy M. Boorda, commander of NATO's southern forces.

Asked if the meeting signals that punitive air strikes are imminent, Ms. deLaski said: "That will be up to the warring factions in Sarajevo."

But she said efforts to put the Serbian artillery under U.N. control still have "a long way to go."